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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANTS: Costa et al.

SERIAL NO.: 09/876,364

GROUP ART UNIT: 1744

FILED: June 7, 2001

EXAMINER: Chorbaji

FOR: VESSELS AND COVERS

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.: 14077/257986

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Angela M. Rossi

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

DATE: January 10, 2005

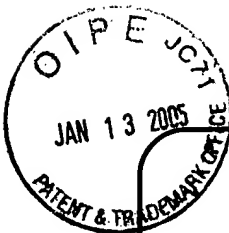
AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

Sir:

Responsive to the Office action dated November 17, 2004, Applicants respectfully submit the following amendments and remarks in connection with this application.

Amendments to the claims begin at page 2 of this paper.

Remarks begin at page of this paper.

**TRANSMITTAL
FORM**

(to be used for all correspondence after initial filing)

| | | |
|---|------------------------|--------------|
| TRANSMITTAL FORM (to be used for all correspondence after initial filing) | Application Number | 09/876,364 |
| | Filing Date | June 7, 2001 |
| | First Named Inventor | Alvin COSTA |
| | Art Unit | 1744 |
| | Examiner Name | Chorbaji |
| Total Number of Pages in This Submission | Attorney Docket Number | 14077/257986 |

ENCLOSURES (check all that apply)

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fee Transmittal Form <input type="checkbox"/> Fee Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amendment / Reply <input type="checkbox"/> After Final <input type="checkbox"/> Affidavits/declaration(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Extension of Time Request <input type="checkbox"/> Express Abandonment Request <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Copy of Priority Document(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Missing Parts/ Incomplete Application <input type="checkbox"/> Reply to Missing Parts under 37 CFR1.52 or 1.53 | <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Licensing-related Papers <input type="checkbox"/> Petition <input type="checkbox"/> Petition to Convert to a Provisional Application <input type="checkbox"/> Power of Attorney, Revocation Change of Correspondence Address <input type="checkbox"/> Terminal Disclaimer <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Refund <input type="checkbox"/> CD, Number of CD(s) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Table on CD | <input type="checkbox"/> After Allowance Communication to TC <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to Board of Appeals and Interferences <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal Communication to TC (Appeal Notice, Brief, Reply Brief) <input type="checkbox"/> Proprietary Information <input type="checkbox"/> Status Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Other Enclosure(s) (please identify below): |
| Remarks | | |

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------|-------------|--------|
| Firm | Kilpatrick Stockton LLP | | |
| Signature | | | |
| Printed Name | Bruce D. Gray | | |
| Date | January 10, 2005 | Reg. No. | 35,799 |

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION/MAILING

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| Signature | | | |
| Typed or printed name | Angela M. Rossi | Date | January 10, 2005 |

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.5. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.11 and 1.14. This collection is estimated to 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.